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## Steady in the Saddle

Just like most of you, I watched the events of 11 September 2001 unfold in shock and disbelief. The sheer scope and devastation of the attack is difficult to fathom and impossible to understand. The Nation, the Army, and the Mounted Force have dealt with the initial shock and bereavement. We are now left trying to determine the effects and our reaction to these acts. Two overwhelming questions being asked are, "What impact does this threat have on the Mounted Force?" and "How will we contribute to the war on terrorism?" While I don't know the full answers to these questions, I can offer a few ideas.

### Steady in the Saddle

There are three thoughts that we must remember as we search for our role in combating terrorism. First, our mission remains unchanged: we exist to fight our Nation's enemies on the field of battle and to destroy them in close combat. Second, the Nation looks to us to maintain that capability and they draw comfort in knowing we are the best in the world at close combat. Third, just like our missions in Somalia, Bosnia, or Macedonia, we may be called upon to execute some missions that stray from close combat. Regardless, our ability to execute those missions successfully springs from our competence at our primary task. The skills that enable a combat team to be successful at peacekeeping or humanitarian assistance are derived from being ready for combat. As we develop the tactics, techniques, and procedures for homeland defense, those Armor and Cavalry soldiers in the National Guard will assume some additional tasks based on their relationship to their

home states. But, their ability to successfully execute these missions will flow from their training for war. All Armor and Cavalry leaders need to remain steady in the saddle and continue to train your soldiers for war. Soldiers naturally emulate leaders who remain calm and focused on the mission at hand while developing the appropriate measures for dealing with any new threat.

### Realize There Is a New Threat

Staying steady in the saddle doesn't mean that there aren't some changes that the entire force will have to adopt in order to stay current with this new threat. We at Fort Knox are dusting off the lessons on OPSEC and COMSEC. I recommend that all leaders do this. Computers have become more prominent in all of our organizations and are accessible to everyone. We need to relook some of our Cold War security procedures and update them for the new operational environment. While we have always focused on force protection during deployments, we have not been as attentive to force protection at home station.

For the foreseeable future, we will have to maintain vigilance over our soldiers and train them to watch out for themselves. Our enemy has the advantage of faceless anonymity. He is content to lurk in the shadows as he patiently gathers information on our vulnerabilities. He has clearly proven that he makes no discrimination between soldiers and civilians, so we will have to educate not only our soldiers but also our families on situational awareness, force protection, and risk avoidance. Remember, the enemy is willing to

wait until we grow complacent before he strikes. Leaders at all levels will now have to fight to prevent their soldiers from becoming too comfortable or complacent on OPSEC, COMSEC, and force protection.

### Challenge Old Ideas To Better Meet a New Threat

Our training, leading, and fighting methods will have to change. The senior leaders in the Army realized this a couple of years ago and set in motion the Transformation effort. On 11 September, I was on my way to the third iteration in a series of TRADOC war-games dealing with transforming our doctrine, training, and leading. The terrorist attack underscored the importance of our efforts and the need to transform our Army. It also reinforced my realization that it will not be leaders of my grade and experience that will bring about the changes necessary to move our Army into the future. The senior leaders of the Army will set the conditions for change and improvement, but it will be the sergeants, lieutenants, and captains of the Mounted Force that will develop the procedures that will enable the Objective Force.

An inventive, modern-day enemy will have to be met and defeated by an inventive, adaptive, future-oriented leader. We have plenty of those leaders in our ranks and I want to hear from them. I want you to provide your ideas and methods to *ARMOR* Magazine. I want to have discussions and maybe a few arguments on how to transform the Armor Force into the Objective Force of tomorrow.

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## Commander's Hatch from Page 5

I'm encouraging the publication of pieces like "Chasing the Mythical Commander's Week" that appears in this publication. CPT Connolly identifies a training problem and offers some innovative and probably controversial methods for solving these problems. CSM DePriest and COL Anderson analyzed the complex issue of how to use a Command Sergeant Major in "Redefining the Role of the Command Sergeant Major in a Tactical Environment" in the March-April 2001 issue. These articles and the discussions they trigger are the keys to making Transformation

a reality. Leaders at the battalion and brigade level must encourage their innovative leaders to capture their thoughts and share them with our professional journal. We need the intellectual energy of our junior leaders to meet the challenges that their generation and successive generations will face.

### The Future

At the time I am writing this article, I have no idea of what actions the National Command Authority will choose to pursue. Regardless of the decisions made, I know that the Mechanized For-

ces are preparing to act and carry out those decisions with lethal results. We are in this war for the long haul and I know that Armor and Cavalry soldiers have a role to play in this conflict and in the future. Here at Fort Knox, we will continue to do our best to provide quality training and leadership development for the entire mounted force. I know that each of you will continue to demonstrate the steady competence that has become the hallmark of our force.

FORGE THE THUNDERBOLT  
AND STRIKE FIRST!!